

REMARKS

Claims 1, 5, 6, 9-11, 13-21, 23-26, 33-36, and 38-47 are pending. Claims 1, 10, 42, 45, and 47 have been amended in this reply. Applicants respectfully submit that these amendments raise no new issues for the Examiner, and do not necessitate any further search or consideration. Entry of the amendments therefore is respectfully requested. No claims have been canceled, and no new claims have been added in this reply. Claims 1, 5, 6, 9-11, 13-21, 23-26, 33-36, and 38-47 therefore will be pending upon entry of the above amendments.

Claims 1, 6, 11, 25, 26, 35, 38-41, and 45 have been rejected in the office action under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. patent no. 6,663,426 (Hasircoglu) in view of U.S. patent no. 5,434,362 (Klosowiak). Claims 23, 24, 33, 34, and 36 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Hasircoglu in view of Klosowiak, and further in view of U.S. patent no. 6,083,047 (Paagman). Claim 47 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Hasircoglu.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the allowance of claims 13-16, 42-44, and 46 by the Examiner. Applicants also gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's statement that claims 5, 9, 10, and 17-21 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of their base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 1, 5, 6, 9-11, and 17-21 have been objected to as not accurately describing the claimed connector. In particular, the Examiner contends that the flexible portion cannot extend substantially in a first direction if the board extends from the plug housing in the same direction. Office action at pg. 2, lines 1-6. Applicants respectfully disagree. Applicants respectfully submit that the recitation of the flexible portion extending substantially in a first, or "x," direction, as depicted in Figure 6D, does not preclude the flexible portion from also extending substantially in a second, or "z," direction, as depicted in Figures 6B and 6C.

In the interest of advancing prosecution of the application, however, claim 1 has been amended to recite the flexible portion being thinner than a remainder of the printed circuit board and having a first and a second substantially planar surface so that the portion of the

printed circuit board can translate in a second direction in relation to the housing, the second direction being substantially perpendicular to the first direction.

The Examiner has characterized the channels (25), (25) of the rigidizer plate (20) of Klosowiak as a "flexible portion" as recited in claim 1 of the present application. Office action at pg. 2, line 20. Neither of the channels (24), (25) includes a first and a second substantially planar surface, in contradistinction to amended claim 1 of the present application. Rather, each of the channels (24), (25) is formed by a concave surface, as depicted in Figure 2 of Klosowiak.

The concave surfaces that form the channels (24), (25) facilitate bending of end portions (21), (22) of the rigidizer plate (20) about bend axes (26), (27). The structure that forms the channels (24), (25) does not include a first and a second substantially planar surface so that the end portions of the rigidizer plate translate in a second direction in relation to a housing (or any other structure), where the second direction is substantially perpendicular to the first direction. Rather, the end portions *pivot* about the bend axes, which appear coincident with the channels. Klosowiak spec. at col. 2, lines 65-68; col. 3, lines 1-12; Figures 1-3.

Applicants respectfully submit that the structure that defines the channels (24), (25) of the rigidizer plate (20) cannot facilitate the type of relative movement between a housing and a printed circuit board recited in claim 1 of the present application. Applicants therefore respectfully submit that one of ordinary skill in the art would not have found it obvious to thin the wafer (110) of the Hasircoglu connector as taught by Klosowiak to arrive at the electrical connector recited in claim 1 of the present application.

Claim 42 of the present application has been amended to recite a first printed circuit board at least partially mounted in the first housing so that a portion of the first printed circuit board extends from the first housing in a first direction and can flex in relation to the first housing in a second direction substantially perpendicular to the first direction, the portion of the first printed circuit board being thinner than a remainder of the first printed circuit board and having a first and a second substantially planar surface.

Claim 45 has been amended to recite a printed circuit board mounted in the housing so that an end portion of the printed circuit board extends from the housing in a second

direction . . . , the printed circuit board having a flexible portion formed therein that permits the end portion of the circuit board to deflect in a first direction in relation to the housing, the flexible portion of the printed circuit board being thinner than a remainder of the printed circuit board and having a first and a second substantially planar surface, wherein the second direction is substantially perpendicular to the first direction.

Applicants therefore respectfully submit that claims 42 and 45 are patentably distinct from the combination of Hasircoglu and Klosowiak, for at least the reasons discussed above in relation to claim 1.

The Examiner submits that that Figures 8B and 8C of Hariscoglu show the flex portion (112) of the wafer (110) as having an undulating shape. Office action at pg. 3, lines 14-16. Applicants respectfully disagree with this characterization, as the flex portion (112) is depicted as deflecting in one direction only, rather than in a back and forth manner characteristic of an undulating shape.

In the interest of advancing prosecution of the application, however, claim 47 has been amended to recite the printed circuit board having a flexible portion having a first and a second concave surface portion so that the flexible portion has an undulating shape that permits the portion of the printed circuit board to translate in relation to the housing. Applicants respectfully submit that the flex portion (112) of the Hasircoglu wafer (110) does not have a first and a second concave surface portion. Applicants therefore respectfully submit that amended claim 47 is patentably distinct from Hasircoglu.

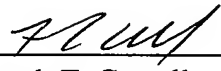
Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 42, 45, and 47 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) or § 103(a) is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and remarks. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 6, 11, 25, 26, 33-36, 38-41, and 43, which depend from claims 1 or 42, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is also requested.

DOCKET NO.: FCI-2656/C3138
Application No.: 10/626,960
Office Action Dated: June 21, 2005

**PATENT
REPLY FILED UNDER EXPEDITED
PROCEDURE PURSUANT TO
37 CFR § 1.116**

A notice of allowability is respectfully requested.

Date: August 10, 2005



Frank T. Carroll
Registration No. 42,392

Woodcock Washburn LLP
One Liberty Place - 46th Floor
Philadelphia PA 19103
Telephone: (215) 568-3100
Facsimile: (215) 568-3439